

PROCLAMATION

No. 17538

By The

Governor of the State of Texas

Executive Department
Austin, Texas
June 9, 1937.

To All To Whom These Presents Shall Come:

I have today disapproved and vetoed House Bill No. 670 for the following reasons:

There is a distinction in the purposes for which the taxes sought to be remitted under this bill may be used and the purposes of the bills heretofore

vetoed. This bill seeks to remit State taxes to pay the general costs of government in the affected counties. This was brought on by virtue of the Federal Government having bought large tracts of land for reforestation purposes, thus taking this property off of the tax rolls. Unquestionably this action on the part of the Federal Government has worked a great injustice on these counties; but the condition will not be cured by the State stepping in and assuming the financing of local county governments. If we do this we will next be called upon to finance city and school governments without any reduction of expenses in these subdivisions of government. There is no pretense or representation that these counties have reduced their cost of government or that they intend to do so.

The State, of course, does not have an interest in helping these people, but, as I see it, there are three other interested parties. First, the citizenship of the counties affected themselves; second, bondholders; third, the Federal Government. It seems to me that before the State embarks upon a policy of donation of all the taxes in these counties there should be some concessions from all of these interested parties.

In conference with people from some of these counties I have suggested that possibly there should be a consolidation of counties and a resulting decrease in the cost of government. I have been told without exception that the people of the affected districts would not vote for such consolidation. If they are not willing to make sacrifices themselves, then I am unwilling for the State to prolong and promote the present unfortunate situation by donation of taxes with no strings to it.

In 1933 under a preceding administration authority was given the Federal Government to buy up lands in these counties for reforestation purposes. There is apparently no opposition whatever to this program. It is only beginning and, as I understand, the Federal Government contemplates buying lands in several other counties which will take such property off the tax rolls. Of course, in some instances it is too late, but with reference to the purchase of remaining lands the people of the counties and districts affected as well as the Legislature had best give this some consideration, rather than encourage these conditions by assuming the cost of government in such districts.

For all of these reasons, the bill is accordingly vetoed and disapproved, and a copy of this proclamation attached to same is ordered filed with the Secretary of State.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto signed my name officially and caused the Seal of State to be impressed hereon at Austin, this the 9th day of June, A. D. 1937.

JAMES V. ALLRED
Governor of Texas

(Seal)

By the Governor

(Signed) Edward Clark
Secretary of State